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A LETTER
TO
THE REV. TORIAL JOSS,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,
Tabernacle Walk.

By WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD-STREET,
AND AT MONKWELL-STREET MEETING.

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to

The Rev. T. J O S S,

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

" Grace, mercy, and peace, be with thee."

It is with some degree of grief that I frequently hear of your bearing so hard upon me as an Antinomian, in your pulpit. You, who heard the whole of my testimony, and the confession of my faith, and my call to the ministry at my ordination; you, who publicly declared, before the whole audience, that God was the author of it, and that this you should never be at a loss to prove while you was in possession of a bible. And in this faith your hands, with the rest of the presbytery, were laid upon my head, attended with an humble prayer to God to bless my labours, which he has condescended to do to this day. You then desired me to take my axe and go to work. I did so, and have kept hard at it ever since; and I took the same axe that the Lord's forerunner did;

and endeavoured to lay it to the root of the trees, by cutting at their legal and partial obedience, at their birth privileges, and at their form of godliness without the power, warning such hypocrites to fly from the wrath to come; and have enforced repentance toward God, and fruits meet to prove it genuine, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believes on him is not condemned, nor ever shall be; but is justified freely from all things; but 'he that believes not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him.' But then, why does my good old father cut at me for this good work? it is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the ministry. I know what I say in these things, and whereof I affirm. I am at a point when I preach them, and I am at a certainty in the faith of them. I do not like partiality. My good old father has laid his hands upon some who have told all the world that they were nothing but impostors; but then they escaped without being called Antinomians; this honourable title falls to me, who, by the way, and through the good hand of God, have brought more honour to them than all that they ever set apart before or since.

Last Wednesday night at the Tabernacle my good old father was very warm, and rather violent. But there were some present who could prove the apostle's assertion to be true—that those, who desire to be teachers of the law, know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. And thou, Reverend Sir, art
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the man; you cleared nothing, you proved nothing, you settled nothing. "But my principles are horrid." Here is the charge, but no proof to support it. Is it horrid to say that we were shut up under a school-master till faith comes, and when it is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster? To assert that we are redeemed from under the law, delivered from the law, and divorced from the law, that we might be married to another; yea, become dead to the law by the body of Christ, and espoused to him, that we might bring forth fruit unto God? Is it horrid to say that the law of faith, which is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, makes me free from the destroying power of the law of sin, and from the law of death, engraven on tables of stone, and from the bondage of it? Doos looking into the perfect law of liberty, and continuing therein, bring nothing to a man's heart but horrid principles, and nothing to his life but horrid practice? I read that such a man shall be blessed *in* his deed, though not *for* it; which shews that such a law inclines him to good deeds, and the very doing is attended with the blessing of heaven. These things, Sir, do not lead to licentious living; it is *the proud doer* that lives in sin; all that are in the flesh, and under the law, bring forth fruit unto death. Sin has dominion over every man that is under the law; nor will it ever be subdued till under grace. Where the covenant of life and peace is revealed with power, there the law of truth will be both in the heart and in the mouth; and such, and only such,

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will walk with God in peace and equity. And this doctrine maintained will turn many away from iniquity; Mal. ii. 5, 6; while the opposite party will cause many to stumble at the law, by being partial in it, and not using it lawfully to those persons for whom it was made; namely, for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners, &c. But my good old father had another throw, "That I made no difference between the moral law and the ceremonial." But this charge had no more to support it than the other. When Paul tells the Romans to reckon themselves dead to the law, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ; and the Galatians, that if they sought perfection in the flesh, and righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ should profit them nothing; and the Colossians, that the handwriting against them was nailed to the cross; and the Corinthians, that the law engraven upon tables of stone was done away and abolished, 2 Cor. chap. iii. ver. 7, 11, 12, 13—does he mean the ceremonial law? if he does, let Mr. Joss tell us when that law was given to the Romans, &c. &c.

I never read that God ever brought the Gentiles under the ceremonial law at all. It is true, the Gentiles might steal some things from the Jews, and especially the things of their altars and sacrifices, and adopt them into their heathen worship; but then we are told that those things which the Gentiles sacrificed they sacrificed to devils, not to God; for God never gave that law to them, that I read of; and so,
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according to Mr. Jofs, Paul preached up among the heathen deliverance from the bondage of a law they were never under. But this fruitless toil can never be ascribed to so wise a master builder. It is not to be found in Paul's writings, though it is in Mr. Jofs's words.

But father Jofs says he never expects "to be delivered from a law, which commands him to love God with all his heart and with all his soul." The Antinomian that Mr. Jofs cut at loves his Maker as much as ever Mr. Jofs did. But I am determined, by the grace of God, to be honest in this matter, and not make people believe that my love to God comes by the law, or that it sprung up in my heart while I was under the law; or that it flowed into my heart as a fruit of my obedience to the law: for this is giving the lie both to God and conscience; for 'the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, nor can be;' nor does love come by the law, nor faith, nor life; nor is love of the law; nor is it obtained by obedience to the law; nor is it communicated by the preaching of the law; for God neither works miracles, nor ministers the Spirit, by the works of the law, but by the preaching of faith. God's self-moving love to his elect was fixed upon them from everlasting, before the creation of the world, consequently before ever the law was given. This love is secured and promised to us in Christ Jesus, and not in the law, which worketh wrath—quite the re-

verse of love. This love is free in its fountain, free in its channel, free in the administration of it, and free in its operation: 'I will love them freely,' irrespective of works, worth, or worthiness. God's love 'is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost freely given to us;' which ever-blessed Spirit is the Spirit of promise; a free gift to us; whose first fruit is love, and real love is perfect liberty, and a perfect deliverance from the yoke of bondage, from the law of works, from the fear of its curse, and from the torment that it threatens. Now, if father Jofs has ever received the love of God, he must have received it in this channel, and in no other; and, if he has received it, why does he boast as if he had not? The law does not exclude boasting. Why does he palm his love to God upon the helpless commandment, which commandment is weak through the flesh, and can afford no help to us in this matter? And shall I stand up before an audience, and preach up and plead for the law, and talk of my love to God, and call it my obedience to the law, and so degrade the sovereign bounty of heaven, and Jesus Christ, the grand medium of all conveyance? If a man loves God, it is because God first loved him; and, if the righteousness of Christ is on the sinner, and the love of God in his heart, *the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him.* This I allow, but it is not fulfilled by him; for both righteousness and love are freely bestowed upon unrighteous persons, who are avowed enemies to God, and to all godliness.

Let us be honest, father Jos, and not cry up our obedience to the law, but the unmerited mercy of God in Christ to such poor, cursed, hell-bred sinners as we were, who were by sin the slaves of Satan, and by nature the children of wrath. When I met you in the Tabernacle vestry at Bristol, I gave you an opportunity to dispute this point with me. I brought it upon the carpet on purpose, but you declined, and fell in with all I said, without contradicting a word. You blessed me for my faithful testimony, delivered before you and three thousand more, and begged God's blessing on it, and gave me the right hand of fellowship, and wished me success in the work. I am the same man now that I was then. At Stroud, in Gloucestershire, you told an inquirer that you did not like me at all. Be it so. I always liked you. But at Greenwich, when in company with a friend of mine, you liked me much, and my doctrine too. Let us lay by this walking in craftiness; but, above all, lay by handling the word of God deceitfully. You have been so long used to say 'a confederacy' to all the Tabernacle connection, and to conform to all that venerable society, by conniving at some reproof-worthy, countenancing others who ought to be shunned, and cutting at others out of complaisance to the rest, that I much fear you have lost a good deal of that tenderness, feeling, conscientiousness, honesty, uprightness, and faithfulness, that is required in a steward of God. It is not shaping a profession, a conversation, and a ministry,

nistry, to every person's humour, temper, principles, and empty profession, nor fawning over a parcel of old women, that can be called doing the work of an evangelist. Crying up old Wesley, that enemy of all divine righteousness, in one pulpit, and preaching eternal election in another, is preaching to please men with a witness: but this is not the characteristic of a good minister of Jesus Christ. God has instructed me with too strong a hand to suffer me to walk in this way. Sending persons to heaven who were never converted, and in whom or by whom the Spirit never spoke, and who fought and preached themselves, not the Lord Jesus, and who have left nothing behind them but a testimony against their own souls, is assuming an authority which God has not granted; and to charge persons with horrid principles, which you cannot disprove, is no better. If you choose to dispute this point with me, undertake it; if not, don't fight against God, nor his grace, lest he serve you as he did *Evans* at Bristol. You are not equal at present to this task. Your conformity has dried up a good deal of the moisture and power of your right arm, and your right eye is not a little darkened; you are not so bright as you were. Be a little more faithful; separate the vile from the precious; don't aim to please all, lest your profiting appear to none. Congregations that are like a parish pudding, made of all manner of ingredients, are not true churches of Christ. Arminians, Moravians, Socinians, Arians, Pharisees, and Calvinists, all huddled together,

together, and a ministry shaped to please such a convocation, must veil the wise, and varnish the fool; starve the saint, and feed the hypocrite. This is Tabernacle and Tottenham work. And sure I am that God will purge his floor; and, if it is not done by the faithful preaching of his word, he will do it by the sword of war, by the wind-fan of damnable errors, by more faithful labourers raised up, or by persecution unto blood. And the present or rising generation of the righteous will have to thank the linsey-woolsey preachers of the present day for it; and, among the rest, the dissimulating captain Joss.

My good friend knows that many have laboured long and hard in reproaching me; but what have they gained by it? Poor old father *Woodgate* toiled at it till he lost the favour of many of his friends, which so filled him with jealousy that he became delirious and useless. Mr. *Morton* pursued the same till his charge dismissed him; Mr. *Meyer* went on till he got into prison, Mr. *Watts* laboured at it till he called preaching free grace rocking the devil's cradle, who has since been laid aside as a dry tree; Mr. *Barnet*, at Lewes in Suffex, till the congregation turned him out, and he got another place built in expectation that many would follow him, (but not four did;) Mr. *Garret*, at Basingstoke, went on with the same till the people despised him, and he left the place at midnight; Mr. *Evans* went on till God struck him first dumb, and then mad, and at last sent him to his grave;

grave; and Mr. Gwynne has toiled, till he is so shut up that he cannot come forth, either with a mouthful of truth, or a grain of common sense; as a sermon of his now in my possession shews; and, as for *Maria* and *John Ryland*, they are no more: and I believe the captain will get no more honour from God than these did. My testimony for Christ is the same that it was when you so much applauded it. If this shooting is intended to thin my followers, it has all been hitherto in vain. I have above three thousand even in London to this day. If it is intended to stop my usefulness, it is in vain also; for God still gives testimony to the word of his grace. If it is intended to blacken my character, it has had no effect. I can still shew my faith by my works; or, if it is intended to deter or frighten the people, it has not succeeded; they are bomb-proof, and I stand manifested in their own consciences; yea, they see eye to eye with me, and a consistency and a certainty in my doctrine. It is neither beating the air, blowing an uncertain sound, nor running at an uncertainty. Grace and works, service in the oldness of the letter and in the newness of the Spirit, can never stand together. You may at this work bring a deal of sin to your door, which some future trial may awaken your conscience to let in; which will never be removed by looking to the law, but by doing as I do—looking to Jesus, and trusting in him as the sinner's all in all. Dying in faith has the promise of a crown of life,
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and nothing else ; and let it be your wisdom to live
as you would hope to die,

Rev. Sir,

I remain affectionately yours,

In the truth of the Gospel,

WM. HUNTINGTON, S. S.

Church-Street, Paddington,

March 25, 1794.